

The role of (social) media in political polarization: a systematic review | Taylor & Francis Online

By Emily Kubin and Christian von Sikorski

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Rising political polarization is, in part, attributed to the fragmentation of news media and the spread of misinformation on social media. Previous reviews have yet to assess the full breadth of research on media and polarization. We systematically examine 94 articles (121 studies) that assess the role of (social) media in shaping political polarization. Using quantitative and qualitative approaches, we find an increase in research over the past 10 years and consistently find that pro-attitudinal media exacerbates polarization. We find a hyperfocus on analyses of Twitter and American samples and a lack of research exploring ways (social) media can depolarize. Additionally, we find ideological and affective polarization are not clearly defined, nor consistently measured. Recommendations for future research are provided.

[...]

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